

UPWARD BOUND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
CONERNING ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF THE REPORT
Program Year 2003-04

Each Upward Bound project is required to prepare the annual performance report in accordance with the instructions provided at the following Web address:

<http://www.ed.gov/print/programs/trioupbound/report.html> (Upward Bound and Veterans Upward Bound)

<http://www.ed.gov/print/programs/triomathsci/report.html> (Upward Bound Math-Science)

The performance report includes four parts:

- Section I requests project identifying information;
- Section II contains detailed instructions for preparing a data file of information on individual participants;
- Section III requests information on the extent to which the project has met its objectives; and
- Section IV poses questions for those projects that have implemented the Upward Bound Initiative first funded in fall 2003.

Prior to the due date for submitting the annual performance report to the Department of Education, each grantee must prepare electronic files with the individual participant records (Section II). Projects will respond to online forms for Sections I, III, and IV.

Question #1: How should a project begin to prepare the performance report?

Response #1: First, an Upward Bound project must review the required data elements in Section II of the report (including new ones added for the 2003-04 data collection) to ensure that the project is collecting all the required information. If some data elements are not being collected, the project should develop plans and procedures to collect the required data.

Next, the project should determine how it will prepare the electronic data file of individual participant records. Below, in response to question #2, is a brief discussion of options available for preparing the participant data file.

If you currently have a management information system for your project with participant level information, you may choose to create a "text file" or export the data to a spreadsheet or database. If, however, your project does not have a database or the

database does not capture many of the required data elements, you may decide to use the Department's Tool (see discussion of this tool under question #3).

Question #2: What options are available for preparing the participant data file (Section II of performance report)?

Response #2: A grantee has three basic options for preparing the student data file. You may choose any of these options, provided you submit the data in accordance with the instructions for preparing the participant data file (Section II of the performance report). These instructions are available at the following Web address:

<http://www.ed.gov/print/programs/trioupbound/report.html> (Upward Bound and Veterans Upward Bound)

<http://www.ed.gov/print/programs/triomathsci/report.html> (UBMS)

Option A: Use the database or spreadsheet that you currently use to capture and manage your project data. Then export the data required for the performance report to an Excel spreadsheet, Access database (mdb), or database file (dbf). If you choose this option, you must:

- Change your column names to match the "Database Column Names" provided in column three of Section II--Record Structure for Participant List (if you are using Access, you must change the column names in the "Design, Table");
- Provide the data (columns or fields) in the same order as that used for data fields in column three of Section II of the report instructions (i.e., the first column of your spreadsheet must be PR, the second column must be BatchAY, etc.); and
- Use only the valid field content provided in column eight of the report instructions. For example, the valid field content for "Gender" (field #9) is 1 for Male, 2 for Female, and 0 for Unknown. Values such as M for Male and F for Female are not acceptable.

Option B: Prepare a "text file" in accordance with the record structure provided in Section II of the report. A text file (sometimes called an ASCII text file) is a text-only document that contains no formatting; by contrast, word processor files insert special (non-readable) characters for bold text, italic text, and underlined text, etc. Most current word processing software will save a document as a text file, usually under the "Save As..." and "Save as type. . ." options. This will remove all special formatting from the file. The advantage of a text file is that it is a standardized file type and many different software packages can read the data in the file. Once you have created the text file, you must check the file to ensure that the data fields exported correctly and that the data elements meet the valid field content requirements provided in column eight of Section II of the report instructions.

Option C: Use the software tool developed by the Department of Education for capturing and submitting the performance report data.

Question #3: What is the Department's tool?

Response #3: With input from the TRIO community, the Department developed the Upward Bound Annual Performance Report (APR) Participant Data Collection Tool (or UB Tool), which is a self-installing electronic software application that you may use to collect the data required in Section II of the performance report for UB and UBMS projects. A similar software application has been developed for Veterans Upward Bound projects. The UB and VUB Tools are stand-alone applications that require no additional software to run. However, in order to properly run this application, you must have an IBM-compatible PC with the Windows 95 (or higher version) desk operating system.

These applications are designed to assist grantees, especially those without participant databases, in meeting the new performance reporting requirements. The UB and VUB Tools will also help grantees check the quality of their data submissions in order to reduce the number of potential errors associated with importing data to the TRIO databases.

The UB and VUB Tools are currently being updated and will be available for download by November 1 from the TRIO Web site. Projects that have used the UB or VUB tools in previous years will be able to import their data into the new tools.

Question #4: Must an Upward Bound project use the Department's tool?

Response #4: As noted above under the response to Question #2, Upward Bound grantees have several options for preparing the individual participant records; use of the UB or VUB Tool is one of them. You are encouraged to select the method most compatible with your current data management systems.

Question #5: What are the features and functionality of the software tool?

Response #5: The UB and VUB tools are software applications to assist grantees in submitting the required data for the annual performance report electronically. *The tools are not intended to serve as project management information systems* and thus have limited functionality. Grantees without an automated participant recordkeeping system may use the tools to manually enter the participant information. The tools are designed to reduce the number of input errors by prompting the user to enter valid field contents. Once all the required data are entered, the project can create a file to upload via the UB Performance Report Web site and submit to the Department of Education as Section II of its performance report.

The UB and VUB Tools also have three additional features to assist grantees.

- Each tool allows grantees to select data fields from other databases and import the data into the tool. The grantee can then use the tool to check the data for formatting and field content errors. Once the data is checked, the grantee can create a file to upload and send to the Department of Education.

- Each tool allows grantees to export the data to another database, spreadsheet, or management information system. This feature allows UB projects to use the performance report data to develop a project management system without having to re-enter the basic data required for the performance report.
- Each tool will generate a statistical report that aggregates the individual participant data.

Question #6: How can one prevent Microsoft Excel from automatically dropping the initial “0” in a date field?

Response #6: Excel attempts to convert all numbers to a correct format. By entering “022571” in a field, Excel will convert that to “22571” because that is a true number. *To avoid this problem, the cell needs to be formatted as a text field.*

- If you are entering data where an entire column will be in above format, select the entire column by clicking on the grayed column name, for example “E,” so that it turns gray.
- The next step is to select the Format menu and the “Cells...” prompt. You can also do this by clicking on your right mouse button while the mouse is over the highlighted column and selecting “Format CellsK.”
- A tabbed dialog box should now appear. The first tab, “Number,” is the tab you need to work with.
- Change the category to “Text.” DO NOT change the category to “Date” because it can give you some unexpected results.
- Once the cell/cells have been formatted as text, Excel will maintain the original “0” in “022571.”

Alternatively, to format as a text field, you may place an apostrophe as the first symbol within a cell.

SUBMITTING THE ANNUAL REPORT

Question #7: Are Upward Bound projects to submit the annual performance report electronically?

Response #7: Yes. All Upward Bound projects are expected to submit the annual performance report via the World Wide Web. The Web application for submitting the report will be available at the following Web address on **November 1, 2004**:

<http://www.ed.gov/print/programs/trioupbound/report.html> (Upward Bound and Veterans Upward Bound)

<http://www.ed.gov/print/programs/triomathsci/report.html> (UBMS)

Question #8: How does a project use the Web to submit the annual performance report?

Response #8: The Web application for UB grantees to use to submit the UB annual performance report has the following features:

- Online Web forms for completing the project identifying information (Section I), providing information on the extent to which the project has achieved its objectives (Section III), and answering questions about the Upward Bound Initiative (Section IV);
- Functionality to upload electronic files with the records of individual participants (Section II);
- A submit button to send the entire report to the Department of Education; and
- An e-mail confirmation that the report has been submitted.

Beginning with the 2002-2003 report, so as to meet the Department of Education's security standards and policy directives, the Web site required the use of passwords, and will do so for the 2003-2004 report. In late October 2004, the Department will send a temporary password to each grantee; upon first use of the Web site, the grantee will be guided to select a new password that must meet certain requirements regarding number of characters and use of combinations of characters (English upper and lowercase, numerals, and special characters). A "forgot password" link and the Help Desk will be available should you need assistance with your password. Any project director who does not receive a letter or e-mail message from the Department containing the temporary password by November 1 should call the Help Desk.

Question #9: How are the participant records (Section II) uploaded?

Response #9: The UB Performance Report Web site has features for you to use to upload a file with participant data. Once you are at the site and have entered your project identifying information in Section I, you will be given two methods to upload your file:

Enter the file name:

- When prompted, enter the file name into the window (e.g., A:\Student.txt); and
- Click the Upload button to start the file upload.

Or use the Browse feature to locate the file:

- Click the Browse button to open the window that will allow you to locate the file with the participant data (or the narrative summary) on your computer;
- Click on the file name so it is highlighted;
- Click on the Open button to select the file name and close the Browse window; and
- On the UB Web page, click on the Upload button to start the upload.

With either method, when the upload is completed, the Web page will display the “Filename” and “File Path.” Check these before proceeding to ensure that the correct files were uploaded.

Question #10: Have Macintosh users experienced problems uploading data files when using Internet Explorer?

Response #10: Yes, some projects using Macintosh have experienced problems uploading data files to the Department’s Web site using Internet Explorer. To prevent this, Macintosh users should use Netscape 4.7 or higher to upload data files.

Question #11: Will a project receive confirmation that the report has been successfully submitted?

Response #11: Yes. When completing Section I of the report on the Web, the project staff member who is entering the performance report data will be asked to provide an e-mail address. After also completing Sections II-IV of the report, project staff will reach the “Submit Application” page, where he or she will be reminded to check the accuracy of the information entered and to print a copy of the report. After verifying accuracy and printing the report, the project staff member will click the “Submit” button at the bottom of the page, generating a message that the report has been successfully submitted. A confirmation will also be automatically e-mailed to the address that the project entered in Section I.

Question #12: After electronically submitting the report, should a project also send a paper copy of the report with the original signature of the project director and certifying official?

Response #12: Except for Section I, the Department of Education only requires an electronic version of the performance report information. A grantee, however, must submit, via fax, a signed copy of Section I of the report form that certifies that the information submitted electronically is accurate, complete, and readily verifiable. The signed copy of Section I *only* of the report should be faxed to: [number to be provided later]. *Please do not fax in a copy of the entire report.*

Question #13: Should a project keep a printed copy of the electronically submitted annual performance report?

Response #13: Yes, projects should retain a copy of the electronically submitted report for their own files. As noted in question #11, at the “Submit Application” page of the Web application, projects will be reminded to check the information they have entered and to print a copy of the report. Please note that the printed report will show all the information entered on-line (Sections I, III, and IV) and will include the name of the file you uploaded (Section II). The contents of the uploaded file will not be on the printed report. Your project should maintain an electronic version (and, if desired, hard copy) of this file as documentation of the data submitted to the Department.

Question #14: When time is short, may the project director and certifying official sign the printed version of Section I prior to completing the entire report?

Response #14: No. In signing the printed version of Section I, the project director and certifying official are making the following assertion: “We certify that the performance report information reported and submitted electronically on [date] is readily verifiable. The information reported is accurate and complete to the best of our knowledge.” Such statements can be truthfully and responsibly made only after the report has in fact been completed; therefore, the on-line application has been designed to print Section I only after the project has completed the entire report.

Question #15: When is the annual report due?

Response #15: In accordance with the Department’s regulations, the annual performance report is to be submitted within 90 days of the end of each 12-month grant (budget) period. For the 2003-04 performance report, the Department of Education has extended the report due date to November 30, 2004 for those Upward Bound projects with project periods that began in June, July, or August 2003.

*Grantees **should not** wait until the last week of November (or December for UBMS) to submit their performance reports via the World Wide Web, as this practice has the potential of overloading the Web sites. When a large number of users use a Web site at one time, there may be interruptions and delays. **Upward Bound grantees are asked to submit their performance reports as soon as complete data are collected.***